

Ferrari F375

**Scalextric C.2803 Ferrari F 375,
- Froilan Gonzalez, British Grand Prix 1951.**

**Scalextric C.2915 Ferrari F 375,
- Alberto Ascari, Italian Grand Prix 1951.**

Af Holger "Slaasshh" Thor

The Commandatore, Mr. Enzo Ferrari himself, the man behind the Prancing Stallion, started his career as a race driver, but soon progressed to team owner. His Scuderia Ferrari raced Alfa Romeos before the war, but with the war over and Alfa Romeo's factories in ruins, Enzo Ferrari decided to build his own cars bearing his name.

His first Formula One car was called Ferrari F 125 and was ready for the newly introduced World Championship for drivers in 1950. The first season was only a modest success, the Scuderia being totally outclassed by the Alfa Romeo team and its 158 model, which won all races during the season, except Indianapolis 500, where only American build cars participated.

Their next development called Ferrari F 375 was ready for the 1951 season, but Alfa Romeo continued to dominate, winning the first 3 races with their 159 model (again discounting the Indy 500). But then came Silverstone and Argentine born Froilan Gonzalez took a superb win in his Ferrari F 375 ahead of Juan-Manuel Fangio in his Alfa Romeo 159. And the success kept on!

Next round of the championship was the German Grand Prix on the Nürburgring. This time Alberto Ascari took a fine win in his F 375, and again Fangio was second in his 159, but the next places were taken by Froilan Gonzalez, Luigi Villorosi and Piero Taruffi, all in F 375 models, and on sixth place came Rudolf Fischer in a two-litre Ferrari F 212, making it a sensational 1-3-4-5-6 result for the Scuderia Ferrari.

Next race was the home Grand Prix on the Autodromo Nazionale in the park of Monza, and Alberto Ascari in front of Froilan Gonzalez gave the Scuderia a magnificent one-two win.

Due to lack of competitors in Formula One racing in 1952 and 1953 it was decided to adopt Formula Two regulations. During these two seasons the Ferrari F 500 dominated totally. But that is a different story.



"The Pampas Bull" Froilan Gonzalez on his way in his Ferrari F 375 #12 to his and Ferrari's first ever Grand Prix victory on Silverstone, July 14th 1951, beating among others Juan-Manuel Fangio and his Alfa Romeo 159. Argentine born Froilan Gonzalez was a fit, tough and strong driver with his vast bulk seemingly overhanging the cockpit sides as his arms flailed away at the steering wheel (an impression caught very well by this Scalextric model). Gonzalez first came to fame when he was victorious over the pre-war Mercedes W163's on the tight Costanera street circuit in Buenos Aires during 1951. Then came the above victory on Silverstone. A victory he repeated in 1954 when he again saw off the entire works Mercedes team and Juan-Manuel Fangio in his Mercedes W196 Streamliner. This time driving a Ferrari F 625.

Called "The Pampas Bull" by all his fans over the world, his close colleagues called him "El Cabazon" (Fat Head). Heavily hit by the tragic death of his fellow countryman Onofre "Pinochio" Marimon during practise for the German Grand Prix, July 31st 1954, Froilan Gonzalez nearly hung up his crash helmet. He managed to make some occasional come backs over the next years, but his heart was never fully in it again. His last Grand Prix was in Argentina in 1960. Born October 5th 1922 Froilan Gonzalez is, amazingly, according to the World Wide Web still alive.



Alberto Ascari driving his Ferrari F 375 #2 to victory on Monza September 16th 1951, winning his second Grand Prix in a row.

In the years 1952 and 1953 he in a Ferrari F 500 totally dominated Formula One (now with Formula Two regulations) winning 11 Grand Prix 's in total, nine of them in a row. A record still not beaten. Not surprisingly he was crowned Champion of the World both years.

1954 was to become a tougher year. Signed up to drive the revolutionary Lancia D50 Alberto Ascari only participated in four races this season. Two of them in a Maserati 250F, one in a Ferrari F 625 and only for the last race of the season in Spain his D50 was ready. Ascari started from pole and led the race until he was forced to withdraw due to mechanical failure.

1955 was to become even worse. Ascari retired in the first race in Argentina, and in the second race at Monaco he took over the lead after the retirement of both Mercedes W196. A lead he held for only half a lap, when he missed a chicane, crashed and threw both him self and his Lancia D50 into the harbour of Monte Carlo.

4 days later, on May 26th 1955 and still shaken by the Monaco accident, Alberto Ascari made a test drive in a Ferrari 750 sports car he was to share with Eugenio Castellotti at this years Supercortemaggiore 1000 km race.

He crashed on his first testing lap and died from his injuries.

Note: As delighted I was when I first saw the Scalextric version of the Froilan Gonzalez driver figure, so deeply disappointed was I seeing the same driver figure used as Alberto Ascari. In my mind this little plastic fellow is the total image of Gonzalez, where Ascari had a totally different appearance. And he always drove with a light blue helmet with no peak. Scalextric - shame on you!